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ABSTRACT

A study of code-switching in the classroom language use of a group of Ohio third graders used as data over 17 hours of conversation taped in September through December during structured small-group lessons, informal conversations, whole-class lessons, and peer teaching of English to monolingual and Spanish-dominant children. The group included Spanish monolingual, Spanish-dominant, balanced bilingual, and English-dominant students. The study focused on situations in which students used both languages most often. An ethnographic approach was used to analyze the instances and contexts of code-switching and to develop a situation typology. Nine categories of code-switching context were identified: regulatory (to control group behavior); emphasis (to stress a message); attention attraction; lexicalization (lexical need, cultural association, or frequency of use in one language or the other); clarification; instructional (to teach second-language vocabulary); sociolinguistic play (for humor, teasing, punning); addressee specification (to accommodate the linguistic need or choice of the addressee or to exclude individuals from the interaction); and miscellaneous. The considerable use of English, even among some Spanish-dominant students, raises questions about generalizing to children the previous findings about the use of Spanish and English among Spanish-speaking adults. (MSE)

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FUNCTIONS OF CODE-SWITCHING IN A SPANISH/ENGLISH BILINGUAL CLASSROOM*

Irma Olmedo-Williams

ABSTRACT

This paper reports on a study conducted in a third-grade Spanish/English bilingual classroom to see how bilingual children "code-switch" or alternate between their two languages in that setting. A typology of code-switching in the classroom is developed based on patterns in the children's conversations. These patterns reveal that the children code-switch to attract the listener's attention and gain the floor, to emphasize and clarify aspects of their communication, and to cooperate among themselves to resolve instances of miscommunication. Through detailed analysis of bilingual classroom discourse, the study demonstrates that the ability to switch between two languages, which is part of the child's communicative competence, is a linguistic resource upon which these children capitalize to communicate more effectively with their peers and adults in the classroom.

In the past decade a new dimension has been added to American classrooms: the use of native languages other than English to carry out the instructional process. This development parallels a growing interest in the way children use language, both at home and in the school setting. Researchers

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and educators have been interested in exploring the kinds of knowledge children have that help them use language appropriately. Bilingual classrooms are consequently becoming an interesting arena for researchers, especially those in the fields of sociolinguistics and classroom interaction.

One important focus of this research involves the exploration of children's "communicative competence." The term "communicative competence" is to be distinguished from Chomsky's "linguistic competence." Chomsky (1965) was interested primarily in the knowledge needed to produce grammatically correct sentences in a person's native language and the recognition of incorrect ones. "Communicative competence" is a broader term, encompassing the knowledge necessary to use language that is appropriate within a specific context and across different contexts, including knowledge such as when to speak or be silent, when to use a formal or informal register, and how to adjust language to accommodate the needs of different listeners (Hymes, 1971).

Bilingual children in bilingual classrooms both develop and display their "communicative competence." By the time children enter school, they have already become socialized into language use patterns appropriate to their home environments. Children whose native language is Spanish and who speak it at home, in addition to having learned the syntactic and semantic aspects of Spanish for their developmental levels, have learned social rules about language usage. These social rules might include refraining from participation in conversations carried out by adults unless asked to do so, not contradicting the statements of elders even

if they are incorrect or untrue, or the proprieties regarding which language to use with certain people. All of this knowledge about language usage is part of their "communicative competence."

Upon entering school, children are exposed to a different kind of talk. Heath (1978) refers to classroom discourse as a register, "a conventionalized way of speaking used in specific social settings" (p. 1). This talk is directed towards specific goals, constrained by the nature of classroom roles, and generally characterized by the use of certain strategies such as giving directives, providing explanations, and evaluation of responses (Green, 1977). Bilingual children, aside from adding a classroom register to their code-repertoires, may also learn that their native languages will either not be tolerated or will be ineffective in getting the message across. In bilingual programs they may learn that there are times and places where each language is to be used or that there are situations when "code-switching" or alternating between their two languages may lead to more effective communication.

Code-switching is the topic of this study. It has been defined as "the alternating use of two languages on the word, phrase, clause, or sentence level" (Valdes-Fallis, 1978a, p. 1). This paper describes how bilingual children alternate between their two languages and what functions such alternations serve in the classroom setting. Analysis of conversations in this classroom shows that code-switching, rather than being a haphazard process, exhibits functional patterns, patterns that are similar to what researchers into the nature of classroom conversation

refer to as instructional strategies. Bilingual children, in addition to learning a classroom register, are learning that code-switching is a strategy available to them for improving classroom interaction and negotiating their participation in it.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In recent years there has been a growing interest in the code-switching of bilinguals. Research into this phenomenon has been carried out in many languages, including English and German; Swedish, Greek, and Italian; two dialects of Norwegian; Hindi and Punjabi; and Spanish and English. Gumperz (1976) has laid the groundwork for many of the theoretical concepts that have guided this research. He argues that code-switching carries social meaning either by signaling a change in setting, activity, or participants (situational code-switching) or by highlighting aspects of a message either through emphasis or contrast and other stylistic effects (conversational code-switching). Examples of situational code-switching are Hispanics switching to English when an English speaker enters the conversation or speaking one language at home and another at work. An example of a conversational code-switch might be the insertion of a Spanish exclamation in an otherwise English sentence to create a certain emotional climate, such as a Puerto Rican teacher's comment to her class: "*Ay bendito*, don't talk so loud!" In this example, though "*Ay bendito*" could be translated into "Oh, my goodness!", the Spanish exclamation might project a more personal appeal than its English translation.

One focus of research on code-switching has pointed to syntactic patterns and constraints on this linguistic behavior, a kind of "grammar of code-switching." Poplack (1979) has summarized these constraints into two rules: the free morpheme constraint and the equivalence constraint. The free morpheme constraint states that "codes may be switched after any constituent in discourse provided that constituent is not a bound morpheme" (p. 9). She gives as an example of this constraint the fact that no data has shown constructions such as "EAT*iendo*," where a Spanish ending is attached to an English stem. The equivalence constraint states that "code-switching will tend to occur at points in discourse where juxtaposition of L1 [language] and L2 elements does not violate a syntactic rule of either language" (Poplack, 1979, p. 10). She gives the example of the sentence, "I told him that *PA' QUE LA TRAJERA LIGERO*." (I told him that so that he would bring it fast.) The permissible switching points would be where "the surface structures of the two languages map onto each other" (Poplack, 1979, p. 11). On the basis of these two constraints, one can conclude that even when bilinguals code-switch between their two languages, they adhere to the grammatical rules of each language in doing so.

A second approach taken to research on code-switching is to determine why people code-switch by exploring what factors influence this phenomenon. It is not totally satisfactory to ask people why they do so. Some people may not be consciously aware of this alternation in their speech. Others may be embarrassed by the question since this is a socially stigmatized linguistic

behavior in many quarters, sometimes attributed to inadequate knowledge of either language.

One way to answer why a code-switch has occurred in a conversation is to look at samples of discourse to see if patterns occur in the alternation. Some of this research has pointed to the following variables influencing this process: characteristics of the participants, of the setting and activity, changes in topic, and the semantic intention of the speaker. The language proficiency, language preference, social identity, and role of the participants may influence code-switching (McLure, 1978; Poplack, 1978; Genishi, 1976). Genishi's study of six-year-olds indicated that the implicit rule they followed was "speak the language your listener knows best" (p. 2). Zentella's study (1978) showed that older children would attend to the linguistic preference of their addressee and speak the respective language. Poplack's study (1978) showed that the ethnic identity of the addressee influenced code-switching patterns since it occurred more frequently among Hispanics than between a Hispanic and Anglo Spanish speaker. McLure (1978) showed that role identity influenced code-switching since older siblings would often switch languages when assuming a parental or caretaker role.

Code-switching patterns were also influenced by the characteristics of the setting and activity. It occurred more often in informal settings than in formal ones. Within the classroom, teachers would conduct the main part of the lesson in one language and switch for asides or parenthetical remarks (Zentella, 1978; Phillips, 1975). Shultz (1975) showed that code-switching would

also occur for teasing, humor, and game playing.

The topic also influenced code-switching. Fishman *et al.* (1971) referred to language specialization by domain, Spanish being the language of home, family, and religion, whereas English was the language of school and work. Huerta (1978) found that code-switching into English occurred in the home when the topic turned to school or work-related matters. Poplack (1979) found a similar switch into Spanish for ethnically loaded topics such as conversations on native foods.

The last major category to trigger code-switching was the semantic intention of the speaker. Researchers have pointed to the following functions code-switching served: to quote another person's speech, signal a position of authority, distinguish between personal and impersonal conversations, attract the addressee's attention, and elaborate upon and clarify aspects of a sentence (Valdes-Fallis, 1978b; Gumperz, 1976; McLure, 1978).

The previous studies form the basis for much of what is known about code-switching. However, few of the studies focus on language usage among children and even fewer on detailed analysis of bilingual classroom discourse. This was the area investigated in our study.

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The study reported here is part of a larger study on language usage in a bilingual classroom.[1] The research was carried out in

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[1]The larger study is the author's doctoral dissertation, "Functions of Code-Switching as a Communicative Strategy in a Spanish-English Bilingual Classroom," Kent State University, December, 1980.

a third-grade classroom in Northern Ohio. The school is located in a city with a large Puerto Rican population, the heaviest concentration being right in the vicinity of the school. Many of the Puerto Ricans migrated to the city around World War II, but new migrants continue to come every year. Therefore, there is always a monolingual Spanish population in the school.

The main participants for the study were a group of 8 to 16 students in the classroom. Two of the students were Spanish monolinguals, three others were Spanish dominant, three were more balanced bilinguals, and the rest were English dominant.[2] The teacher for the class was a Puerto Rican bilingual, brought up and educated on the island, but quite fluent in English.

Data Gathering

For the larger study, a total of 17½ hours of conversations was taped over a four-month period between September and December. These included recordings of two small Spanish language arts groups during structured lessons with their teacher and informal conversations among themselves, English language arts lessons and math lessons involving the entire class, and several recordings of peer teaching situations in which a bilingual child taught English to Spanish monolingual and Spanish dominant children.

Conversations during Spanish Language Arts sessions and English peer teaching episodes formed the major data base for

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[2]These judgments were based in part on the school's classification from placement records but were revised based on teacher and researcher observations. In general, they coincided with self-reports on their language proficiency given by the children.

this paper. It was in these situations that the Spanish-speaking children were able to use both languages since there were no English monolinguals involved. Preliminary observations indicated that in the presence of English monolinguals, with few exceptions, English was used. During Spanish language arts sessions, students were engaged either in structured lessons with the teacher or researcher or in informal conversations among themselves. During the peer teaching situations, one student (MI) taught English vocabulary and pronunciation to one or more Spanish monolingual or Spanish dominant students. This last set of recordings was especially interesting because one could see the peer teacher employing many of the strategies utilized by the regular teacher in the classroom and using both languages to do so.

Methodology for Data Analysis

Research into bilingual classrooms and code-switching in that setting is still in its infancy. This is one reason why a statistical hypothesis testing approach did not seem appropriate for this study. Rather, the methodology undertaken was to identify patterns, using an ethnographic approach to the data.

An ethnographic approach helps to define the relevant variables as they occur in natural settings (Erickson, 1977). This approach to the research yields hypotheses that can lead to later statistical testing. For this study the approach involved audiotaping participants' conversations to document classroom talk and make retrospective analysis possible, capturing contextual factors as part of the data base for analysis, incorporating the researcher's role as a participant in the setting and using it as

input into the analysis, developing the categories for analysis largely based on patterns in the data itself rather than on pre-set categories, and including the participants' interpretations as part of the analysis.

The questions to be answered were the following:

1. What functions (strategies, patterns) can we identify in the code-switching in this classroom?
2. Do these bilingual children employ code-switching to resolve instances of miscommunication or potential communication breakdowns?

Steps for the Analysis

The following steps were taken in carrying out the analysis:

Step 1: Identifying instances of code-switching.

An important focus of this study was to explore the ability of children to use the full resources of both languages. Therefore, the working definition of code-switching was alternation between two languages by the same speaker, "intrapersonal code-switching," either within that child's turn at speaking or at his/her next turn in the episode. A code-switch could occur intra-sententially or intersententially. The English and Spanish portions of a code-switch had to clearly belong to one or the other language. However, some common English loan words inserted into a Spanish message were not considered instances of code-switching but were seen as a part of a Puerto Rican variant of Spanish, e.g., "*Pregunta a la* teacher" (Ask the teacher), where "teacher" is commonly used even by monolingual Puerto Rican speakers of Spanish.

There were many conversations in which both English and Spanish were used, but each speaker spoke only one language. These conversations were special in that they pointed to receptive language skill on the part of the children, their ability to receive a message in one language and respond correctly in the other language. A few of these "interpersonal" code-switches were included in the analysis if there were instances of miscommunication that needed to be resolved. This was done to explore ways children would attempt to resolve these communication breakdowns.

Step 2: Identifying the episode.

Gumperz (1976) argues that if one is to adequately interpret the meaning of a code-switch, it is necessary to study messages in the context of entire passages, rather than limiting the analysis to the internal structure of each sentence. For this study, the "episode" became the relevant passage. The episode has been defined as a unit of interaction between two or more speakers, generally around the same topic, and with an identifiable beginning and end point (Genishi, 1976). The episode could also be defined by the fact that students were engaged in the same activity. An example of an episode might be a question and answer session after a story. The episode would start with the teacher asking the questions; it would include the answers given by the students, and it would end when the teacher acknowledged their answers and moved on to another activity. An episode can also be divided into sub-parts, each of which has definable boundaries.

Step 3: Describing the context.

"Contexts are constituted by what people are doing and where and when they are doing it" (Erickson and Shultz, 1977, p. 6). There were many situations in which the function of the code-switch could only be determined by considering it in relation to what other speakers said or did, that is, the code-switch itself is tied to other messages or behaviors that occur within the conversation. Cook-Gumperz and Gumperz (1976) argue that context is "a framing device for the semantic interpretation of message intent" (p. 2), or "the extra-linguistic phenomena in which, in a sense, the text is embedded" (p. 3). The description of the context was therefore part of the analysis.

Some of the contextual cues relied upon for explaining the function of a code-switch include the following: characteristics of the participants, especially linguistic proficiency or dominance and role; and paralinguistic cues, such as intonation, stress and pitch, and behavioral cues. For example, exaggerated stress and pitch on the part of a Spanish dominant student when uttering an English sentence might indicate that he or she is teasing a fellow student, whereas a similar intonation contour on the part of a bilingual student who is in a peer teaching role might indicate that he or she is engaged in an instructional strategy, modeling in the second language. Laughter on the part of participants would be an additional cue to confirm such an interpretation.

A description of the context may never be complete; but by looking at surface level cues, we can begin to get an objective

picture on how participants work with each other's messages. In addition, one can also elicit the input of the participants in making an interpretation of their behavior.[3]

Step 4: Developing a typology.

This involved the following process:

a. Examining and synthesizing existing typologies (Gumperz, 1976; McLure, 1978; Valdes-Fallis, 1978a; Hatch, 1976). These were also examined in relation to Halliday's seven functions of language in children (1973).

b. Analyzing the audio-taped data and extracting patterns from it.

c. Using these patterns and previous typologies to develop a typology of code-switching in the classroom.

RESULTS

Table 1 gives the typology of code-switching derived from the analysis of the tapes.

There are some general comments that can be made about code-switching in this classroom. English was the predominant language of the classroom. Most of the instruction took place in English, with the exception of Spanish Language Arts and Spanish as a Second Language lessons. These amounted to about 45 minutes a day. But even during these times, students used a great deal of English.

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[3]Such a procedure was followed in the larger study. A modified triangulation technique was undertaken to elicit student and teacher interpretations of their code-switches.

Table 1

TYPOLOGY OF CLASSROOM CODE-SWITCHING PATTERNS

Regulatory (REG)

Speaker switches languages to control the behavior of a participant in the group, regulate speaking turns, and threaten or criticize a member of the group to change that person's behavior.

Emphasis (EMP)

Speaker switches languages to underline a message and place special stress on it.

Attention Attraction (ATT)

Speaker switches languages to get recognition, bid for floor, or assert ability.

Lexicalization (LEX)

Speaker switches languages either because of lexical need, cultural association, or frequency of use of vocabulary in one language. Can include random and high frequency of items, such as numbers, letters of the alphabet, discourse markers, etc.

Clarification (CLA)

Speaker switches languages to insure comprehension and resolve instances of miscommunication or ambiguity. Includes strategies such as repeating, expanding, or paraphrasing a message. Also includes requests for clarification.

Instructional (INS)

Speaker switches languages to teach vocabulary in the second language.

Sociolinguistic Play (SOC)

Speaker switches languages for humorous purposes, punning, teasing, insult games, etc.

Addressee Specification (ADD)

Speaker switches languages to accommodate the linguistic need or choice of addressee. Can include sequential switches where one speaker switches languages after another speaker has done so. Also includes switches to exclude others from the interaction.

Miscellaneous (MISC)

Code-switches that did not fall into any of the above categories.

Code-switching patterns were influenced by the nature of the task and the presence of the teacher. For example, a Spanish reading lesson with its accompanying discussion with the teacher yielded only two instances of code-switching, whereas a Spanish word game among the children yielded 15 code-switches. This finding supports previous research (Shultz, 1975) on the incidence of code-switching during structured lessons vs. informal classroom conversations.

The typology on Table 1 gives the patterns identified in the data. In this paper, two of the patterns are reported, with corresponding examples. These patterns would be classified under the categories "Clarification and Emphasis" and "Attention Attraction."

Pattern 1--In giving directions, clarify and emphasize your instructions by repeating, paraphrasing, or giving examples in the alternate language.

Example 1--Peer teaching episode. Mi (Bilingual) is teaching English vocabulary to Ja (Spanish Monolingual-SM) and El (SM) and Ma (Spanish dominant-SD).[4] She gives them the word that they are to repeat and explains the directions in both languages.

	Transcript	Translation and Gloss of Cues
Mi:	"Ham"	"Ham" Mi gives the word.
	Este aquí.	This one here. (Points to word in book.)
	Vamos a decir esto	We are going to say this

[4]The following abbreviations are used: B = Bilingual, SM = Spanish Monolingual, SD = Spanish Dominant, ED = English Dominant, Re= Researcher, Gr = Group, and Te = Teacher. All other abbreviations stand for children's names.

4 veces.	4 times.
Esto 4 veces y	This 4 times and
esto 4 veces.	this 4 times. (Points to other words in book.)
FOUR TIMES ALL OF THEM.	Code-switches to English using slower rate.

All: "Ham, ham, ham, ham." (The students repeat the word.)

Example 2--Peer teaching episode. Mi is teaching English vocabulary to a group of students (Ja, El, and Ma). She is using a set of word cards. She wants to read all the word cards first and have the students listen, then have them repeat after her. The students think that she wants them to repeat after each word.

	Transcript	Translation and Cues
Mi:	First I'll say it then you guys.	Mi gives directions while holding up word card with word "fat" on it.
Ja:	"fat"	Ja reads word from card.
Mi:	*PRIMERO YO, ENTONCES CUANDO YO ACABE TODITO, LE DIGO.*	"First me, then when I finish everything, I'll tell you." (Mi repeats directions and switches to Spanish.)
Ma:	"fat"	Ma reads word from card.
Mi:	"Don't say it. *CUANDO YO LO DIGO SE QUEDAN CALLA'O.* When I say it, you keep...you hear it.	Mi addresses Ma in English. "When I say it, you keep...you hear it." (Mi switches to Spanish and switches back to English to repeat her directions.)

In example 2, it is interesting to note that Mi begins her directions in English, even though this is a Spanish dominant group. This may be a reflection of classroom language rules, similar to the patterns used by the teacher during English language arts. First, instructions are given in English for the

group as a whole and then repeated in Spanish for the Spanish dominant students.

One variation on Pattern 1 was the way children cooperated among themselves to solve instances of miscommunication or potential communication breakdowns. In such cases, one student would frequently take on the role of spontaneous translator for the rest of the group, or for the member who may have misunderstood.

Example 3--Researcher has been reviewing Spanish vocabulary words with Spanish language arts group. One of the words was "*tela*" (fabric), and the researcher asked the members of the group if they knew how to sew. Several students answer at the same time in Spanish, except Sol, who responds in English. Sol is rated as bilingual but tends to initiate in English.

	Transcript	Translation and Cues
Re:	*¿Y Vds. saben coser?*	"And do you know how to sew?" Re addresses question to group.
Gr:	*Yo sé un poquito.* *Yo sé.*	"I know a little." "I know." (Several students answer at the same time.)
Sol:	I KNOW.	Sol responds in English.
Pa:	*Yo tengo una máquina de coser.* *Mi mamá tiene una máquina pa' coser.*	"I have a sewing machine." "My mother has a sewing machine." Pa (bil) addresses the group in Spanish.
Sol:	WE DO TOO, BUT I SEW BY HAND.	Sol addresses group in English.
Re:	*¿Si? ¿Cómo dijiste? ¿Cómo dijiste que yo no te oí?*	"Yes? What did you say? What did you say, I didn't hear you?"
Pa:	*Ella dice que ella sabe coser con la mano.*	"She says that she knows how to sew by hand." (Pa translates Sol's comment.)

In example 3, Sol has spoken in English, whereas the other students have spoken in Spanish. When there is a communication breakdown, as when the researcher asks her to repeat her comment because she has not heard her, Pa translates Sol's comment for the researcher. It is interesting to note that the translation is completely idiomatic. Though the expression is "I sew by hand" in English, Pa translates into idiomatic Spanish, "I sew with the hand."

Example 4--Researcher is asking students questions from a Spanish book. The object of the lesson is practicing numbers in Spanish. One question is about the children's addresses. The participants are a Spanish language arts group. Both Jo and Vi are English dominant, though Jo seems to speak more Spanish in the class.

	Transcript	Translation and Cues
Re:	*¿En qué calle vives tú?*	"What street do you live on?" Researcher addresses Jo.
Jo:	*¿Yo? En la veintinueve.*	"Me? On 29th Street." (Jo responds.)
Re:	*En la calle.*	"On street...." (Re attempts to have Jo give a complete sentence.)
Jo:	*En la veintinueve.*	"On 29th Street." (Jo repeats address.)
Vi:	I DON'T KNOW MY STREET.	Vi whispers to another student in English.
Re:	*La veintinueve.* OK. *Vivo en la veintinueve.* *Y tú Vi, la misma.*	"Twenty ninth. OK. I live on 29th Street." (Re models the sentence for Jo.) "And you Vi, the same one." (Re turns to Vi and asks the same question.)
Vi:	*Yo vivo en la calle de....* (Pause)	"I live on street...." (Pause) Vi begins to answer but does not give a number.

Re:	*¿Dónde vives tú Vi?*	Where do you live Vi?" (Re repeats question.)
Vi:	(Silence)	Vi is quiet and does not respond.
Jo:	WHAT STREET DO YOU LIVE ON?	Jo switches to English and addresses Vi. He translates Re's question.
Re:	*¿En qué calle?*	"On what street?" (Re repeats.)
Jo:	WHAT STREET DO YOU LIVE ON?	Jo repeats question in English.
Vi:	I DON'T KNOW THE STREET.	Vi responds to Jo in English.

In example 4, Jo noted that there was a communication breakdown, as evidenced by the fact that Vi did not respond to the question. He translated the teacher's comment in an attempt to correct the breakdown, and Vi responded. Such code-switching was a frequent form of cooperation among the children.

Pattern 2--If you do not succeed in attracting the attention of the listener and bidding for the floor by using language A, switch to language B.

Example 1--Teacher is conducting a reading lesson and discussion with a Spanish language arts group. The story was about a trip from Puerto Rico to the States. As an introduction to the story, she begins to ask students to tell how they got to where they are living. She had asked one student, Ev (ED) but another student, Cr (ED) wants to respond.

	Transcript	Translation and Cues
Te:	*¿Y cómo viniste aquí?*	"And how did you get here?" Te addresses Ev.
Ev:	*En avión.*	"By plane." (Ev responds.)
Cr:	*Mira, mira,* when I was a little baby.	Cr attempts to get teacher's attention and uses Spanish and English.

Te:	*¿En avión?*	"By plane?" (Te addresses Ev and ignores Cr's statement.)
Cr:	*Mira.*	"Look." (Cr addresses teacher again.)
Te:	*¿Tú te acuerdas?*	"Do you remember?" (Te asks Ev.)
Cr:	*Mira,* when I was a little baby.	Cr again attempts to get the floor.
Ev:	*Hace tiempo....*	"A long time ago...." (Ev talks about her experience.)
Cr:	*Mira, mira, cuando, cuando yo era chica, yo estaba, yo estaba aquí.*	"Look, look, when, when I was little, I was, I was here." (Cr switches to Spanish.)

Cr had tried to attract the teacher's attention and bid for the floor. When she is unsuccessful in English, she switches to Spanish and gives her experience.

Example 2--Spanish language arts students are writing Spanish sentences based on a picture they have described. One student, Jo, is having difficulty spelling some words. Since several students talk at the same time, he is not succeeding in getting his question answered.

	Transcript	Translation and Cues
Jo:	How do you spell *pichón*?	Jo asks question of group.
Sol:	*El pichón tiene un gusano.*	"The bird has a worm." Sol has been reading her sentences aloud and continues to do so.
Jo:	How do you spell *el*?	Jo asks question of group.
Sol:	*Yo veo las montañas.*	"I see the mountains." Sol continues to read.
Jo:	How do you spell *el*?	Jo repeats question.
Sol:	*Las flores.*	"The flowers." Sol continues to read.

Jo:	*¿Cómo se escribe el?*	"How do you write *el*?" Jo switches to Spanish to ask question.
Re:	*¿el? ¿el?* *¿Cómo se escribe el?*	"the, the? How do you write the?" (Re asks group.)
Cr:	*E L.*	"E L." (Cr spells the word.)

When Jo is unsuccessful in getting his question answered, he code-switches to Spanish.

Example 3--Re is talking with the Spanish language arts group about the kinds of sports they play. When addressing the boys with a question, one girl, Cr, wants to respond.

	Transcript	Translation and Cues
Re:	*¿Y la pelota?* *¿A Vds. les gusta?* *¿A Vds. los muchachos les gusta jugar pelota?*	"And baseball? Do you like it? Do you boys like to play baseball?" (Re addresses question to group but elicits answer from boys.)
Cr:	*Aha.* *A mi sí. A mi sí.* I LIKE IT. I LIKE IT.	"Uhum. I like it. I like it." Cr speaks out and repeats her comment in both languages.

Cr answers the question not addressed to her. She translates her comment into both languages in an attempt to get the floor. It is interesting to note that both her comments are idiomatically correct.

Example 4--Spanish language arts group is writing sentences. Several students are having difficulty in attracting the attention of the researcher since she is helping another student.

	Transcript	Translation and Cues
Jo:	*Niños.* How do you spell *niños*? How do you spell *niños*?	"Boys." Jo asks question of the group. He wants to know how to spell the word "*niños*."

Ev:	*¿Cómo se escribe jugando?*	"How do you spell *jugando*?" Ev asks question of researcher.
Sol:	*Mira, mira, los niños están jugando con la bola.*	"Look, look, the children are playing with the ball." Sol reads her sentence.
Ev:	LOOK AT MINE, HEY.	Ev switches to English and addresses Re who is listening to Sol.
Jo:	*Niños*, ain't it? That says *niños*. (Pause) That says *niños*? (Pause) *¿ESO DICE NIÑOS?*	Jo asks question of Re who is listening to another student. Jo repeats question. "Does that say *niños*?" Jo switches to Spanish to ask his question.
Re:	*Niños.*	Re responds.

In example 4, both Ev and Jo code-switched. Ev initiated her question in Spanish. When she did not get a response, she switched into English. Jo initiated his question in English. When he did not get a response, he switched into Spanish. It is important to note that it is not the direction of the switch that carries meaning, but rather the contrast itself. It would be incorrect to say that one language serves only particular functions in the classroom. It appears from the data that both languages can be and are used by these children for all classroom functions. However, a common strategy is to code-switch when one of the two languages does not appear to be effective.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Analysis of bilingual classroom discourse shows that code-switching is patterned behavior and carries social meaning. These patterns reveal that children do alternate between their

two languages to attract the attention of the listener and gain the floor, to emphasize and clarify aspects of their communication, and to cooperate among themselves to resolve instances of miscommunication. The ability to switch between two languages is a linguistic resource that these children capitalize upon to communicate more effectively with their peers and adults in the classroom.

Although these children did use Spanish in the classroom when interacting with their peers, they used English to a much larger extent, even some who were Spanish dominant. The extent of English usage among the children raises questions about the concept of a "we" vs. "they" code for these bilinguals. Research on adult Hispanics has pointed to the use of Spanish for in-group interaction and for creating a climate of intimacy or solidarity (Valdes-Fallis, 1978b; Gumperz, 1976), whereas English becomes identified more with "out-group" relationships, to be used with non-Hispanics on more formal or power relationships. In studying the interaction of the children in this classroom, we see a reversal. The "in-group" in this case is the peer group, whereas the "out-group" is the adults. It appears that the peer group takes precedence over the ethnic group where language usage norms are concerned. For these bilingual children, English seems to be the language of "in-group" relationships, whereas Spanish is the language of more formal relationships, reserved more for child-adult interactions. Observations of playground conversations also supported this claim as well as children's self-reports on their language usage with their siblings. An alternative explanation,

however, is the importance of context in determining language usage norms. The school and the classroom may be perceived as an English dominant setting, and this perception may also carry over to the playground. No detailed study was conducted of the children's language usage in their homes to test whether they actually used more English with their siblings. Detailed discourse analysis of conversation in that setting would give a more complete picture of these children's communicative competence.

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